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ABSTRACT

This study documented variations in program designs and implementation strategies, linking them to beginning teachers' professional growth, particularly reflective practices. Data were collected in six sites during 1999-00 as part of an evaluation of the implementation of the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers, which is part of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA). BTSA program directors were interviewed, and beginning teachers and support providers participated in focus groups. Data analysis illustrated both the importance and the limitation of program structures in contributing to program outcomes. Having the "pieces" in place was a necessary condition for implementation but not sufficient to achieve the desired accomplishment of reflective practice. Equally important was the web of understanding, interpretation, and meaning surrounding the participants. Participants themselves both shaped and were shaped by the interpretive perspectives encompassing their work. Program directors who were aware of the larger context and paid attention to shaping that context were able to influence the position of their programs. Ultimately, the opportunities for beginning teachers to develop their reflective practice was tied to their experiences with the particular support providers with whom they had been matched. The quality of this relationship was key to program success. (Contains 21 references.) (SM)

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Research Association (AERA)
in Seattle, Washington
April 2001

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How Differences in Program Implementation Influence Opportunities for Developing Reflective Practice in Beginning Teachers

Barbara A. Storms (CSU Hayward) and Ginny Lee (Mills College)

A Paper Presented at the National Conference of the American Educational Research Association
Seattle, Washington, April 2001

Executive Summary

Purpose of the Study. The focus of this research was to document variations in program designs and implementation strategies and to link these to the professional growth (reflective practices, in particular) of beginning teachers.

Background. These data were collected in six sites (school districts and consortiums of districts) during the 1999-2000 school year as part of an evaluation of the implementation of the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST) which is part of the larger Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA).

Methodology. In each of six case study site the BTSA program director was interviewed three times between January and June 2000. Also in each site, focus groups for beginning teachers and for support providers were held twice, one in February or March and again in May or June. All interviews and focus groups were tape-recorded and transcribed. Using this set of a priori categories, the two researchers and a graduate research assistant used an iterative process of coding interviews in common, and refining coding categories until the researchers had strong agreement for an interview they read in common. Once a coding system was in place, the two researchers coded the program director interviews. The graduate research assistant read across the focus group interviews by group (e.g., beginning teacher) within a site. The two authors of this study then met and reviewed the findings across all of the sites looking for patterns related to implementation and promotion of and support for reflective practice.

Table 2: Sources of data reviewed for this study

Study Sites	Program Director interviews	Beginning Teacher focus groups	Support Provider Focus Groups
K-12 district 1	3	2	2
K-12 district 2	3		1
K-12 district 3	3	2	1
9-12 district 4	3	4[a]	4
Consortium 1	5[b]	2	2
Consortium 2	3	2	2
Total	20	12	12

a This site was using two levels of CFASST (Year 1 and Year 2) and because of differences in the focus and content of the two levels, separate focus groups were held for each level.
b Two additional interviews were held with district coordinators in two of the four districts in this consortium.

Findings

Implementing of a teacher induction program that supports teacher reflection involves the interplay of structures that support the effort and the intersection of those structures with the perceptions of individuals and groups. Program directors realized that establishing operating structures and procedures and attending to coordination and communication helped to create necessary conditions for implementation. They also expressed awareness that successful implementation required more that simply putting these structural pieces into place. Program directors referred to an array of other factors that enhanced or detracted from implementation: school and district professional culture; support providers' understanding of the program and their

role; the extent to which the "theory of action" implicit in CFASST was aligned with the mental models of individuals and groups; ways in which CFASST was seen as integral or peripheral to new teacher development; and other similar factors related to beliefs, values, and priorities (Lee and Storms, 2001). Taken together, implementation structures and perceptions shape the way that reflection is regarded, valued and used. However, while effective structures and a culture supportive of reflection are necessary, they are not sufficient for ensuring that new teachers will come to understand and use reflection to improve their practice. Ultimately, it is the way in which support providers come to understand and act out their role and the degree to which they value reflective practice that largely determines how beginning teachers view and use reflection

Structures that Support Reflection

The program directors. Program directors were the ones to envision and put the implementation structures into place. Program directors helped to determine the focus of the program as well as to define its place in the larger context of teacher induction and professional development within the site. They acted as administrators managing all of the implementation activities from record keeping, to budgets, to monitoring progress, to report writing. They also served as a trainer and coach to support providers, as well as a monitor of the understandings of participants in terms about how the learning was going.

Administrative roles and lines of communication. Program directors understood the importance of providing consistent messages about the purpose, intention, design and structure of CFASST as well as the expectations for its use. To these ends, program directors created organizational structures to support the implementation. The complexity of the organizational structures was generally determined by the size of the BTSA program: in large programs. An important consideration in specifying lines of communication was to manage all of the decisions, procedures, and tools and processes for getting programs up and running and keeping them running. These structures created built-in feedback systems so that program directors could get input about how the implementation was working.

Inherent reflective structures in CFASST. The organization of CFASST events, linked by a recurring inquiry process, helped to focus the users of CFASST on reflection; however, use of CFASST materials alone was not enough necessarily to insinuate reflection into the daily practice of beginning teachers.

Systems for identifying eligible beginning teachers. Only fully credentialed, first and second year teachers are served in BTSA as outlined in the legislation that funded the program. Developing strong communication links with the personnel department allowed program directors to identify BTSA participants as early as possible, which allowed beginning teachers to experience more of the CFASST events and support and exposed beginning teachers to reflective practice.

Systems for selecting support providers. It mattered if a selection process were in place to ensure that excellent, veteran teachers filled the role of support provider. Settling for teachers who were available or coercing those who were more interested in traditional mentoring positions to take on the support provider role did not work well. It seemed to matter whether the expectations for support providers were clear and whether those serving in the support provider role wanted to be CFASST support providers

Matching support providers and beginning teachers. While different sites matched support providers and beginning teachers using different criteria, the most important factor was matching in such a way as to maximize the interactions between the support provider and beginning teacher. Program directors understood that the more a beginning teachers' support provider was to work with, the more likely it would be that a strong, trusting relationship would develop.

Monitoring CFASST progress. One of the most important processes that program directors developed were methods for monitoring the progress of CFASST users. This monitoring

was not only in terms of how many of the CFASST events they were completing, but also in terms of the kinds of support new teachers were getting, as well as the understandings and tools beginning teachers (and support providers) were gaining from their CFASST experiences.

Creating opportunities for professional development. Much of the work and effort of program directors went into structuring initial CFASST trainings and follow up meetings. These meetings and trainings provided opportunities for CFASST participants to develop understandings of CFASST by coming together to review, discuss, relearn, share and explore CFASST materials and processes.

Developing feedback systems to improve implementation. Beyond meetings, program directors developed additional systems to gather feedback about how CFASST was working for support providers and beginning teachers including written communications and individual conferences. The intent for collecting this feedback was to improve the implementation of CFASST.

Perspectives that Support Reflection

Participants' understanding of CFASST. As program directors and participants described their experiences in implementing CFASST, they illustrated the ways in which individuals' perceptions and interpretations of CFASST and its essential elements played out. Questions and issues that arose for participants often produced alternative views and led to choices that enhanced or diminished beginning teachers' reflective practice.

Views of CFASST activities and forms. A common factor that emerged for both support providers and beginning teachers was the tension between viewing CFASST as a process of inquiry and reflection and regarding it as a paper-driven set of activities to be completed for their own sake. The packaging of CFASST into a set of discrete activities, each with its own set of directions and forms, organized into folders in a tote box, was interpreted by some participants to mean that filling in all the spaces on all of the pieces of paper was the important thing. If a program director stressed completion, then support providers and beginning teachers tended to focus on finishing each of the forms, rather than on the reflective process. However, when support providers' and beginning teachers' understanding of the intention of the activities and questions was more aligned with CFASST's intentions of supporting teacher reflection, participants were less likely to complain about paperwork and were more likely to focus on the ways in which the program provided them with opportunities to think about their practice.

Issues of flexibility. For many participants, their understanding of CFASST was linked to their ideas about what was "allowable" or "appropriate" in terms of flexibility (e.g., modification, adjustment, pacing) in using CFASST. In some instances, participants believed that the structured CFASST process had to be followed with total fidelity for beginning teachers to benefit. This could result in excessive rigidity on the part of the support providers. Program directors wanted participants to regard CFASST as a flexible process. At the same time, they felt responsible for matters of accountability and for maximizing opportunities for beginning teachers to benefit from their experiences with CFASST, which necessarily required attending to the structure and focus of the process.

Support providers' views of CFASST's legitimacy. Despite their having, for the most part, volunteered or applied to serve in the role, support providers differed in their views of CFASST, particularly as it intersected with their ideas about the kinds of support that beginning teachers need. Various factors, combined with the views of the administrators in whose schools the support providers were located, all combined to form an environment that supported the legitimacy of CFASST to a greater or lesser extent.

Support providers' individual understanding of CFASST. To a great extent, the quality of the beginning teachers' experience with CFASST was a direct product of the support providers' understanding of the CFASST structure and process, particularly the focus on formative assessment, using reflection and inquiry.

Support providers' understanding of their role. It mattered the ways in which support providers saw their role. If they understood and valued helping their beginning teachers value reflection, then that was what they emphasized in their interactions. If, however, they believed that their role was one of more general support, then reflecting on practice might not take precedence. In some cases, support providers found themselves being caught between the support provider's role as defined in CFASST and their ideas about the needs of their beginning teachers. Some support providers believed that new teachers would benefit more from forms of direct assistance, such as providing them with sample lesson plans and assisting them with more prescriptive guidance and suggestions. In many cases, program directors worked to help support providers understand a new type of role, one that they probably had not yet experienced themselves as a teacher.

Beginning teachers' understanding of the profession. For many beginning teachers, experiences with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and the activities that comprise the CFASST process introduced them to an entirely new concept of teaching, the teacher's role, and the concept of professionalism. Those who understood the importance of these concepts were better able to benefit from their CFASST work. For example, many beginning teachers commented that the California Standards for the Teaching Profession helped them achieve a new level of understanding about their responsibilities to their students. Their ideas about accountability and about using various forms of data as a way of assessing their own effectiveness deepened as they progressed through the sequence of events. Similarly, their ideas about professional interactions, collaboration, and learning with their colleagues were challenged and extended by their CFASST work. Some were more willing than others to pay deliberate and careful attention to these matters.

Relationships: Support for Reflection in Beginning Teachers. Program directors generally understood that they had a direct influence on the perceptions of the support providers about their role and use of CFASST processes, which ultimately translated into what beginning teachers learned from using CFASST. The ways in which the program directors organized meetings, communicated with support providers, and emphasized particular aspects of CFASST over others all contributed to creating an environment for reflection. Ultimately the possibility for meaningful reflective work depended on how beginning teachers were guided by their support providers to look at their own practice. In order to help beginning teachers develop as reflective practitioners, reflection on practice had to be a central focus in interactions between support providers and beginning teachers. The beginning teacher-support provider relationship was the most important element contributing to reflective practice (Wing and Jinks, 2001)

Understanding CFASST within the Larger Context

Not only were the ways in which participating individuals and groups thought about CFASST important, but meaning-making about CFASST occurred within larger site, district, and consortia contexts which housed related sets of values, ideas, and beliefs about teaching, teacher induction, and teacher development. The "fit" between CFASST and the larger context manifested itself in many ways, and the ways in which the program and the larger context mediated meaning was, for the most part, a two-way street. Contexts shaped BTSA/CFASST and BTSA/CFASST shaped contexts. How this played out was the result of an array of factors related to organizational structure and culture. In general, however, beginning teachers were supported in their reflective practice to the extent that their CFASST programs were connected to site and district priorities and values. Program participants had an easier time attending to their CFASST work when they knew that others who influenced their professional lives (such as site and district administrators) considered this effort worthwhile and central..

Situation of BTSA/CFASST with the site infrastructure. The importance of BTSA/CFASST and its integration within the larger system was related to where it was situated within the site/district. The location of the program, both physically and with respect to reporting relationships and functional activities, influenced opportunities for coordination and collaboration across teacher recruitment, development, and retention efforts. Similarly, the role and status of the program director was a factor that shaped perceptions. Decisions about situating the program and assigning a person to direct it created not only substantive opportunities for coordination, but also symbolic messages about the fit between CFASST and other efforts.

Links between CFASST and the larger picture of professional learning and development. In all instances, CFASST activities alone did not comprise the entire set of staff development opportunities for beginning teachers. Most beginning teachers were also required to participate in other forms of learning, typically related to district curriculum priorities and/or to expectations around classroom management. Depending on how easily these additional professional development activities could be conceptually integrated with CFASST, beginning teachers saw them either as helpful or as competing for their attention.

The role of district and site leaders. District and school administrators played an important role in shaping the place of CFASST within the larger site or district context. To the extent that these leaders were knowledgeable about CFASST and supportive of its intent, they signaled its value to others. Program directors placed a premium on opportunities to meet with and train site administrators about CFASST because they realized that often it was the site administrator who determined whether and how CFASST would be played out.

The program director's role in shaping perspective and meaning. Key to the relationship between CFASST and other activities in the district, and central to shaping the understanding and commitment of district and site leaders, was the program director. By the ways in which program directors regularly communicated with key district and site leaders, included them in planning, engaged them in providing feedback, and involved them in public forums, they provided opportunities for other leaders not simply to understand and endorse CFASST but to shape its implementation.

Conclusions and Significance

This examination of CFASST implementation in six sites illustrated both the importance and the limitations of program structures in contributing to program outcomes. Having the "pieces" in place was a necessary condition for implementation but not sufficient to achieve the desired accomplishment of reflective practice on the part of the beginning teacher. Equally important to the structures was the web of understanding, interpretation, and meaning that surrounded the participants. The participants themselves both shaped and were shaped by the interpretive perspectives that encompassed their work. Program directors who were aware of the larger context and who paid attention to shaping that context were able to influence the position of their programs within the district/consortium.

Ultimately, however, the opportunities for beginning teachers to develop their reflective practice was tied to their experiences with the particular support providers with whom they had been matched. It was the quality of the support provider and of the relationship between the support provider and the beginning teacher that were cited over and over again as the key to program success. From a design perspective, this suggests the importance of focusing on the selection of support providers to identify those with the greatest likelihood of being able to take on the support provider role effectively and on the creation of favorable matches with beginning teachers. To the extent that program directors are able to engage in their own processes of inquiry about program implementation, using data to monitor and assess, they can direct resources to provide additional assistance to support providers who would benefit.

While BTSA/CFASST is a statewide program, this study has illustrated the truism that all implementation is local. Moreover, the data underscore the ways in which the meanings that are attributed to the program shape the experiences of participants. Thus, program implementation necessarily involves attending to structures, procedures, policies, and practices that support the design and intent of the program; it also requires attending to the ways in which individuals and groups understand, value, and interpret the effort. By attending to both of these aspects, program directors increase their opportunities to create sustained support for the program.

Introduction

A history of research on the implementation of innovations has illustrated the need for mutual adaptation of programs (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977) and has highlighted the importance of local context for implementation (Fullan, 1991). This work raises a number of important considerations for those who would undertake large-scale program implementation. To what extent can adaptation occur without undermining the purpose of a particular improvement effort? What factors in the local context are most relevant in supporting effective implementation of a "proven practice"?

California's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program is a large-scale, statewide teacher induction program that served about 25,000 beginning teachers during the 1999-2000 academic year. The statewide effort comprises approximately 140 local BTSA programs, each of which was developed by an individual school district or a consortium of neighboring districts in compliance with a set of program standards. Each local BTSA program is required to include a formative assessment strategy for beginning teachers over a period of two years of induction. During 1999-2000, most (more than 130) local BTSA programs elected to meet this requirement by using the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST), a process that had been developed by consulting agencies in collaboration with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the California Department of Education. Pilot implementation of CFASST during the 1998-1999 school year had illustrated its usefulness in supportive formative assessment around inquiry and reflection.

In taking CFASST "to scale" during 1999-2000, California's Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Department of Education wished to understand more about CFASST implementation. The work of Berman and McLaughlin (1977) suggested not only that researchers should expect to find alterations or adaptations of CFASST at the local level, but that such adaptation would be necessary for successful implementation. Fullan's work on change (1991) highlighted the ways in which the contexts of local represented situationally specific sets of issues

and factors, including multiple stakeholders (individuals and groups) that would necessarily influence implementation.

Understanding the ways in which CFASST implementation played out across a range of sites was seen as potentially useful in a number of ways: 1) It would illustrate implementation strategies and practices that local participants viewed as more or less useful in achieving program goals. 2) It would help in identifying local conditions, factors, or issues that were more or less supportive for program implementation. 3) It would contribute to knowledge about taking reform strategies to scale. This study sought to articulate the ways in which the design and implementation of the induction process by local BTSA/CFASST programs shaped the ways in which beginning teachers experienced and benefited from their involvement. More specifically, it asked the question of whether and how differences in program implementation shaped the opportunities of beginning teachers to engage in reflection about their work.

A major premise of the work was that developing teachers' capacity to engage in reflective practice is necessary to retain teachers in the profession, strengthen the profession, and ultimately improve and reform schools (LaBoskey, 1994; Calhoun, 1994; Ross, 1988; Schön, 1983). Reflective practice is a major goal of BTSA; the CFASST process is aimed at strengthening beginning teachers' capacity to inquire about and examine their practice through supported reflection.

The study relied on case study methods to understand how local programs were organized, how they operated, and how their operation influenced the end-users, the beginning teachers. Several conceptual frames informed the activities that were used to develop the cases by contributing to a set of "sensitizing issues" that shaped the fieldwork and the analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998; Spradley, 1980). As mentioned, the work of Berman and McLaughlin (1977) suggested the importance of local adaptation. Fullan's work (1991) reminded researchers that large-scale implementation must be understood at the local level, which called for an in-depth examination of factors at the level of school sites, districts, and consortia.

Additionally, Fullan (1991) called attention to the issue of meaning and pointed out that to understand why any implementation plays out as it does, researchers must necessarily examine the meanings that various stakeholders attach to the change. Questions about meaning were supported by the work of other scholars who have examined the ways in which meaning is shaped by (formal and informal) leaders (Lambert et al., 1995; Sergiovanni, 1992). Together, this body of research literature sensitized the authors to examine these key domains of implementation: a) the organizational arrangements and tools that local implementers put in place to support implementation; b) the processes, relationships, and experiences of participants; and c) the understandings that participants and stakeholders brought to and derived from their engagement. In examining these domains, the researchers were seeking to uncover multiple strategies that local programs employed to create and maintain both bureaucratic and cultural linkages (Firestone and Wilson, 1985) and to understand the ways in which these linkages contributed to reflection by beginning teachers.

Background: BTSA and CFASST

BTSA's approach to induction involves providing each first- and second-year credentialed teachers with the assistance of a support provider, a more experienced teacher. Formative assessment is central to the support process; as stated above, in 1999-2000, most BTSA programs use the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST) as their formative assessment tool. Figure 1 provides an overview of the two-year CFASST process, which has been described as follows:

> CFASST engages first- and second-year teachers in a series of tasks including inquiries, classroom observations and individual professional development planning based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing & California Department of Education, 1997). In addition, beginning teachers learn about and apply California's State Adopted Student Content Standards and Frameworks through CFASST. With the guidance of a trained support provider (experienced teacher), beginning teachers gather information about best practices, plan

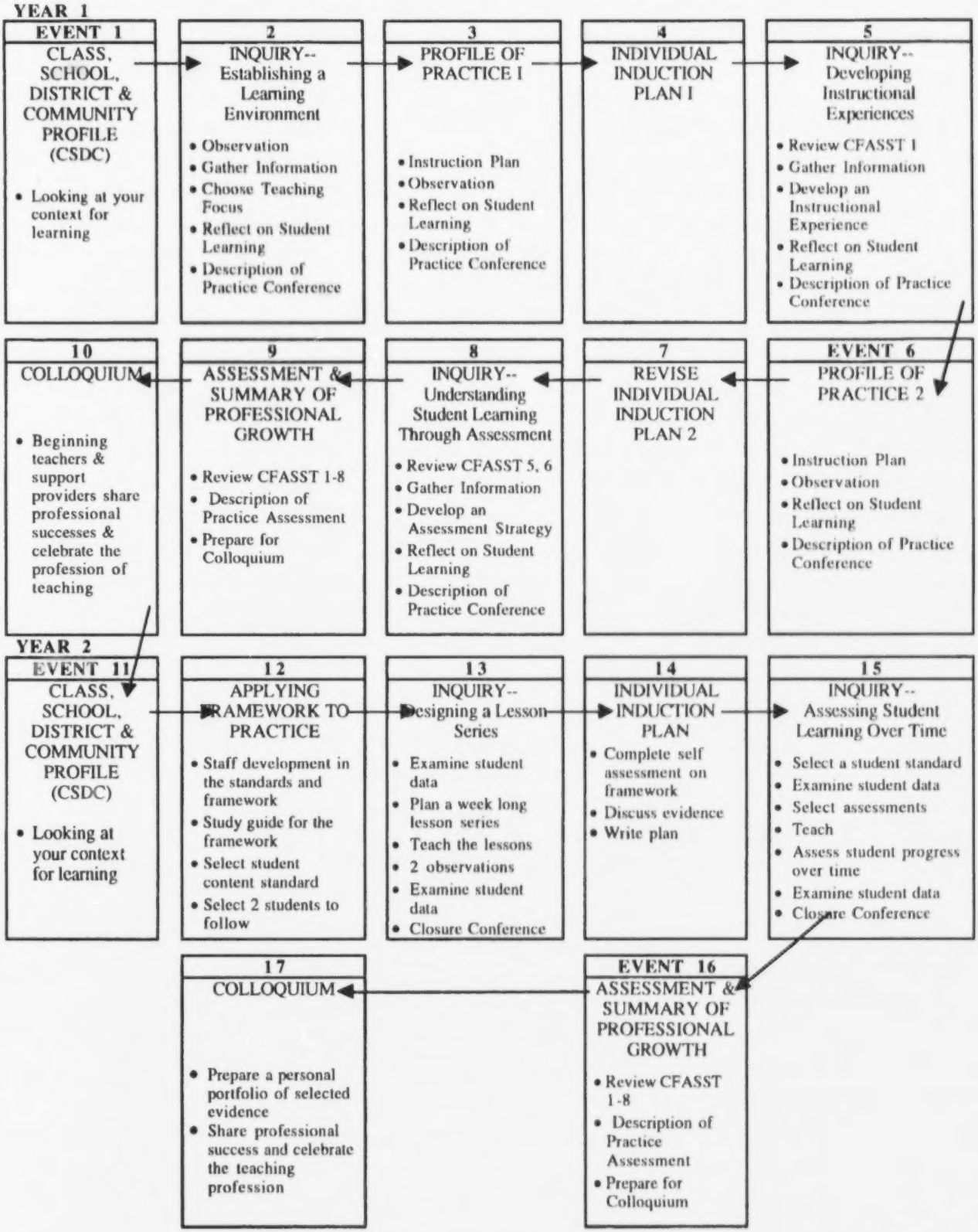
lessons, and receive feedback on their teaching through observations by the support provider. They then reflect on their practice, think about how to apply what they have learned to future lessons, and assess their teaching using a set of scales, the Descriptions of Practice (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing & California Department of Education, 1999). A series of structured activities, termed events, has been developed to focus, guide, and direct beginning teachers through these investigations (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing & California Department of Education, 1998). CFASST was developed through a collaborative effort among the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the California Department of Education, WestEd, University of California Santa Cruz, and Educational Testing Service. (Storms et al., 2000).

A program director in a consortium of districts that were implementing CFASST explained the two-year CFASST process in this way:

> …the first year [of CFASST] predominately focuses on the how-to-teach, translating theory from the university and credentialing course work into actual practice in the context of a local classroom, and then the second year focus is predominately on, now what's the right stuff to teach? Getting some really global understanding of the philosophy about why it is that we're doing what we're doing… (Program Director, Consortium 2, 4/00)

Figure 1

CALIFORNIA FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT & SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR TEACHERS


YEAR 1
EVENT 1
CLASS, SCHOOL, DISTRICT & COMMUNITY PROFILE (CSDC)
• Looking at your context for learning
2
INQUIRY-- Establishing a Learning Environment
• Observation
• Gather Information
• Choose Teaching Focus
• Reflect on Student Learning
• Description of Practice Conference
3
PROFILE OF PRACTICE I
• Instruction Plan
• Observation
• Reflect on Student Learning
• Description of Practice Conference
4
INDIVIDUAL INDUCTION PLAN I
5
INQUIRY-- Developing Instructional Experiences
• Review CFASST 1
• Gather Information
• Develop an Instructional Experience
• Reflect on Student Learning
• Description of Practice Conference
10
COLLOQUIUM
• Beginning teachers & support providers share professional successes & celebrate the profession of teaching
9
ASSESSMENT & SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH
• Review CFASST 1-8
• Description of Practice Assessment
• Prepare for Colloquium
8
INQUIRY-- Understanding Student Learning Through Assessment
• Review CFASST 5, 6
• Gather Information
• Develop an Assessment Strategy
• Reflect on Student Learning
• Description of Practice Conference
7
REVISE INDIVIDUAL INDUCTION PLAN 2
EVENT 6
PROFILE OF PRACTICE 2
• Instruction Plan
• Observation
• Reflect on Student Learning
• Description of Practice Conference
YEAR 2
EVENT 11
CLASS, SCHOOL, DISTRICT & COMMUNITY PROFILE (CSDC)
• Looking at your context for learning
12
APPLYING FRAMEWORK TO PRACTICE
• Staff development in the standards and framework
• Study guide for the framework
• Select student content standard
• Select 2 students to follow
13
INQUIRY-- Designing a Lesson Series
• Examine student data
• Plan a week long lesson series
• Teach the lessons
• 2 observations
• Examine student data
• Closure Conference
14
INDIVIDUAL INDUCTION PLAN
• Complete self assessment on framework
• Discuss evidence
• Write plan
15
INQUIRY-- Assessing Student Learning Over Time
• Select a student standard
• Examine student data
• Select assessments
• Teach
• Assess student progress over time
• Examine student data
• Closure Conference
17
COLLOQUIUM
• Prepare a personal portfolio of selected evidence
• Share professional success and celebrate the teaching profession
EVENT 16
ASSESSMENT & SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH
• Review CFASST 1-8
• Description of Practice Assessment
• Prepare for Colloquium

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Study Design and Methodology

This study examined data from a set of case studies that were conducted during the 1999-2000 school year as part of an evaluation of the implementation of CFASST. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and California Department of Education selected seven BTSA programs as study sites. These sites were not selected to be representative of all of the BTSA programs in the state. Rather, these sites were selected because they were using CFASST for a second year and were therefore likely to provide more information and perspective on what was working and not working well in the implementation of CFASST, the focus of that evaluation. In the evaluation study, four of the case studies followed the implementation of CFASST Year 1 (focus on classroom environment, lesson planning and student assessment); two case studies primarily chronicled the use of CFASST Year 2 (focus on content standards, unit planning, and on-going assessment to strengthen instruction). The remaining site was studied for its use of both CFASST Year 1 and Year 2.

Relying extensively on open-ended, semi-structured interviewing strategies (Patton, 1980; Spradley, 1979; Bogdan and Biklen, 1998), researchers worked with key informants over time to gather rich accounts of their experiences. In each case study site the BTSA program director was interviewed three times between January and June 2000. Also in each site, focus groups for beginning teachers and for support providers were held twice, once in February or March and again in May or June. All interviews and focus groups were tape-recorded and transcribed. Following each interview, researchers created field notes that further qualified the taped material. Data from each site were used to create narrative case study accounts of the implementation efforts (Yin, 1994).

Secondary Analysis: Sources of Data

This paper represents a secondary analysis of data from six of the seven case study sites from the CFASST evaluation. The authors elected not to include one site because the data was incomplete. Table 1 below summarizes information about the six sites.

Table 1

Description of Secondary Analysis Sites

Type of District	Number in Study	Location
K-12 urban/suburban school districts	3	2 in southern California 1 in northern California
Suburban high school (9-12) district	1	1 in southern California
Consortia of urban/suburban districts	2	2 in northern California

For each site multiple sources of data were included in the analysis. Table 2 summarizes the sources of data for this study.

Table 2

Sources of Data for Secondary Analysis

Study Sites	Program Director interviews	Beginning Teacher focus groups	Support Provider Focus Groups
K-12 district 1	3	2	2
K-12 district 2	3	2	2
K-12 district 3	3	2	2
9-12 district 4	3	4[a]	4
Consortium 1	5[b]	2	2
Consortium 2	3	2	2
Total	20	14	14

a. This site was using Year 1 and Year 2 CFASST and because of differences in the focus and content of the two levels, separate focus groups were held for each level.

b. Two additional interviews were held with district coordinators in two of the four districts in this consortium.

Secondary Analysis Strategies

The two authors of this paper were very familiar with the data for this current study, both having served as researchers in the CFASST evaluation study. Because the authors were knowledgeable about the data, they began by identifying implementation factors they recalled as

having been frequently mentioned by CFASST participants. Using this set of initial categories, the two authors and a graduate research assistant coded a small set of interviews in common as a strategy for testing the usefulness of these categories. Each analyst noted how well the coding system captured the relevant factors, whether the system captured the factors in a way that would allow discovery of the patterns and commonalities, and how well the categories represented the thinking of the participants. Several iterative cycles of coding and refining yielded two overarching areas (structures and perspectives) that informed the final coding and analysis activities; within each of these areas a manageable set of sub-categories was used to organize and represent the data. When the coding was complete, the two authors met and reviewed the data to determine both the common and unique ways in which the set of programs approached implementation with respect to reflective practice.

Findings

As described earlier, the CFASST process is intended to build the beginning teacher's capacity to reflect about his/her own classroom and students. In this analysis, the authors were seeking to understand the ways in which differences in program implementation contributed to the achievement of those desired outcomes. Data pointed to the importance of specific program design features and the ways in which these were utilized as key contributors to the achievement of program goals. In particular, the analysis identified the interplay of program structures and participant perceptions. This analysis demonstrated that, in and of itself, program structure alone does not guarantee achievement of desired results. Supporting and enhancing teacher reflection involves the intersection of structures with the perceptions of individuals and groups, illustrating Fullan's claim that the ultimate test of whether an innovation succeeds or fails depends on the ways in which participants make meaning around it (Fullan, 1991). Whether and how participants benefited from CFASST experiences was associated more with the meanings that they attributed to those experiences than to the simple presence or absence of certain design features. Most of the programs used the same materials and similar structures; however, participants' interpretations of program goals, activities, and processes were essential to the quality of their experiences. Taken

together, implementation structures and perceptions shaped the way that reflection was regarded, valued and used.

This section describes essential components of structure and areas of perception that were reported by participants in describing and explaining their experiences. It begins with a description of the ways in which the inherent structures of CFASST support reflective practice and then moves to the findings related to program implementation structures and the associated perceptions.

Inherent Reflective Structures in CFASST

The organization of CFASST events, linked by a recurring inquiry process, helped to focus the users of CFASST on reflection; however, use of CFASST materials alone was not necessarily enough to insinuate reflection into the practice of beginning teachers. There was no doubt though that the organization and emphasis of CFASST events set the stage for the use of reflection.

> The reason I wanted to do this [CFASST Year 2] in the first place was because I wanted some forced reflection. I get very involved and I knew I would and I knew that would be my thought. Because you're thinking of some dynamic things for the next day and you don't take time to reflect on what you just did. This [CFASST] forces you to do that…I just want to keep moving on to the next thing, and that's not going to help me in the long run. (Beginning Teacher, Consortium 2, 2/00)

> CFASST events that have the reflection built in kind of forced you to do that and taught me a lot about myself. (Beginning Teacher, District 1, 2/00)

> I don't know how long it would've taken me on my own to figure out that I needed to do that, I mean without CFASST. Because you look at what you're doing in the classroom and you reflect, and you see that you need to make clarifications to your instructions…You learn about that just through your curriculum training, but basically by doing CFASST it helps break it down more, I think, to where you know what you should be doing. And

> then you're also looking at the standards of teaching and you know that in order for you to be maturing that you need to do [reflection]. (Beginning Teacher 2, Consortium 2, 5/00)

It was possible, however, for beginning teachers, to miss the larger inquiry cycle and instead see CFASST as merely a series of disconnected events and separate forms. That is why the guidance of a trained support provider was essential in making the links that brought the "plan-teach-reflect-apply" cycle to the front while underscoring the value of reflection for improving instruction.

> I even filled in stuff like to just make it up because I had to fill in that box. I don't even remember what it was at the time, but it was totally fabricated because I felt like somebody is going to be looking at this. I have to have it completed. (Beginning teacher, District 1, 2/00)

While the CFASST materials required and modeled reflection, they were only one piece of what beginning teachers needed in order to become reflective practitioners. A range of program structures shaped beginning teachers' opportunities for reflection.

Structures that Support Implementation

In choosing to implement CFASST, each BTSA program was faced with decisions and choices regarding program administration, selection and matching of participants, provisions for additional professional development and internal monitoring and assessment. Without well thought out and coordinated systems, implementation would not have been possible.

Program Administration

Each BTSA program was headed by a director who was responsible for administering the program in compliance with state program standards. In programs that served large numbers of beginning teachers, directors created additional administrative roles to support implementation activities and facilitate effective communication.

The program directors. Program directors were the ones to envision and put the implementation structures into place. In some cases the BTSA program director was a full-time, district administrator. In other sites, the BTSA coordinator was a full-time released teacher on

special assignment. In larger programs, it was common to have an assistant program director working closely with the director. Table 3 summarizes the numbers and types of directors for the six study sites.

Table 3

Number and Types of BTSA Program Directors by Study Site

Type of BTSA Program	Program Directors	Type of position
K-12 urban/school district	1	• 1 district administrator
K-12 urban/suburban district	2	• 1 district administrator • 1 teacher on special assignment
K-12 urban/school district	1	• 1 district administrator
Suburban high school (9-12) district	1	• 1 teacher on special assignment
Consortium of four urban/suburban districts	4	• 1 district administrator working full time as consortium director/district BTSA coordinator • 1 half-time program director in each of the other three districts (two teachers with release time, one district administrator)
Consortium of eighteen urban/ suburban districts	20	• 1 county level program administrator • 1 teacher on special assignment at the county level • 1 program director in each district (some administrators, some teachers, some with release time)

Program directors had varied responsibilities and served many different roles in this implementation. They acted as administrators, managing all of the implementation activities from record keeping, to budgets, to monitoring progress, to report writing. They also served in a professional development capacity as a trainer and coach to support providers, as well as a monitor of the understandings of participants in terms about how the learning was going. Finally, program directors served in a leadership capacity of creating visibility and legitimacy for CFASST within the site. The program directors recognized that their roles were multifaceted and required a myriad

of skills and knowledge not the least of which was a vision of what CFASST would become in the site.

> You definitely need to have a strong background and understanding in the needs of beginning teachers [to be a program director]. You need to have a strong knowledge and research base on quality professional development. You need to be a really good time manager, organizer. You need to be in tune to developing not on the growth of beginning teachers, but what constitutes professional development that's quality for the support providers and for your staff. ...I think you need to be able to communicate local contacts to state leadership so that they understand why you're doing things the way you're doing them. ...You need to be a good facilitator...it's really being able to go beyond the surface and dig deeper into what people are saying and what they're meaning. (Program Director 2, District 2, 4/00)

Other administrative structures, particularly those related to communication, also contributed to the implementation of this induction program.

Administrative roles and lines of communication. Program directors understood the importance of providing consistent messages about the purpose, intent, design and structure of CFASST as well as the expectations for its use. To these ends, program directors created organizational structures to support the implementation. In all six case study sites, program directors sought to develop a clear structure for CFASST decision-making and communication that would support implementation. The complexity of the organizational structures was generally determined by the size of the BTSA program: in programs that served large numbers of beginning teachers, directors created additional leadership positions to assist them in making CFASST work in their sites.

The two consortiums of districts had the most evolved organizational structures. The size and complexity of these consortiums demanded on-going communications between the consortium program directors and the district coordinators. This was often accomplished through regular, or

even daily, phone and e-mail conversations, regular meetings, and even occasional retreats with the program directors and district coordinators.

An important consideration for program directors in developing organizational structures was to specify lines of communication to manage all of the decisions, procedures, tools and processes for getting programs up and running and keeping them running. Organizational structures were created largely to ensure consistency of information across different schools or districts within a program. These structures created built-in feedback systems so that program directors used to obtain input about how the implementation was working.

Policies Related to Participants

Paramount in the CFASST design is the mentoring of the beginning teacher by a trained support provider. Setting up systems to identify and match participants was essential for program implementation.

Systems for identifying eligible beginning teachers. Only fully credentialed, first- and second-year teachers are served in BTSA, as outlined in the legislation that funded the program. While it seems a relatively simple procedure to identify those who qualified for BTSA, in some of the CFASST case study sites it was a major endeavor that required much effort and time on the part of the program director. In addition, in some of the CFASST case study sites, participation in BTSA was voluntary, a situation which further complicated the identification of new teacher participants. Moreover, not all new teachers were hired before the beginning of the school year; as a result program directors were required to identify, train and match support providers with beginning teachers through the beginning of the school year. Early identification of BTSA participants allowed beginning teachers to experience more of the CFASST events and opportunities for reflection.

Systems for selecting support providers. The importance of recruiting and selecting support providers is essential in an induction program such as CFASST. The quality of the program depended in large part on the quality of the support providers. "The support providers are such a crucial link to the successful induction for these teachers. I mean, more so than ever before!"

explained one program director (Program Director, District 2, 4/00). It mattered if a selection process were in place to ensure that excellent, veteran teachers filled the role of support provider. Settling for teachers who were available, or coercing those who were more interested in traditional mentoring positions, to take on the support provider role did not work well.

In most of the six case study sites, previously established selection criteria for mentor teachers were used to identify potential support providers. Typically, these criteria had been negotiated through union contracts and were therefore not easily modified. With the advent of CFASST, in some sites the district decided not to have a mentor program separate from CFASST. In other sites, mentors were chosen, and then they self-selected whether to be a CFASST support provider or to remain a mentor with a separate project. In one case, veteran teachers applied to be CFASST support providers separate from any mentor selection process. In half of the cases, there were more candidates than there were CFASST support provider positions. However, in other cases, additional veteran teachers had to be approached to fill the need.

In all of the six case study sites, program directors set out expectations about what the role of a support provider entailed. In some sites, those expectations were part of a written memorandum of understanding (MOU). In all of the sites, the expectations included a minimum number of contacts or hours per week or month that a support provider was to be in communication with the beginning teacher. In some instances, the expectations spelled out the types of contacts (e.g., face-to-face conferences versus phone or e-mail conversations; attending CFASST meetings together; observing the beginning teacher teaching) support providers were expected to make with their beginning teachers who were using CFASST. The intent of these expectations was to ensure that beginning teachers were receiving on-going support, support that was intended to help them improve their practice.

Matching support providers and beginning teachers. While programs used different criteria to identify support providers, the goal was matching in such a way as to maximize the interactions between the support provider and beginning teacher. The two major factors considered in matching

were physical proximity and teaching content (i.e., grade level or subject). Beginning teachers found both factors to be important.

> ...If our provider were on site, we could see each other in passing and ask a question and just easily hand things back and forth. I think it would really facilitate the interaction if we were on the same site. (Beginning Teacher 2, District 1, 2/00)

Program directors understood that the quality of the relationship between support providers and beginning teachers would largely determine the lessons and practices beginning teachers would take from their CFASST experience. Program directors tried to keep the number of beginning teachers which whom a support provider was working low (1:1 up to 1:4), especially for full-time teachers who were serving as support providers.

Creating Opportunities for Professional Development.

Much of the effort of program directors went into structuring initial CFASST trainings and follow-up meetings. These trainings and meetings provided opportunities for participants to develop understandings of CFASST by coming together to review, discuss, relearn, share and explore CFASST materials and processes.

The state CFASST training model included a multi-day training to introduce support providers to the CFASST processes and purposes as well as the CFASST events (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing & California Department of Education, 1993). The support provider trainings emphasized collecting and using evidence to help beginning teachers reflect.

> It's nice to have someone who isn't your boss or someone like that to come in and observe you and one who tells you from the get-go , 'I'm not here to evaluate. I'm just here to tell you –kind of reiterate on paper – what you've said and what you did.' (Beginning Teacher, District 3, 5/00)

All sites augmented the initial trainings for support provider with regular additional meetings for the support providers and their beginning teachers. The emphasis of these meetings mattered. If the structure and forms of events were the focus, then those were conveyed as the essential purpose of CFASST. If, however, the CFASST events were presented as occasions for

reflecting on practice, then thinking about improving practice was stressed in interactions with beginning teachers.

> Maybe it's how we structure what we do in the regular meetings and making some expectations there. It's practice. How do you question a colleague in a way that's not going to be threatening, but that is to get them to think deeper? ... You want this to be a lifelong way of thinking and learning. (Program Director, District 2, 6/00)

Internal Monitoring and Assessment

One of the most important structures that program directors developed were strategies for monitoring the progress of CFASST users. They monitored not only how many of the CFASST events users had completed at regular points during the year, but also the kinds of support new teachers were receiving, as well as the understandings and tools beginning teachers (and support providers) were gaining from their CFASST experiences.

Monitoring CFASST progress. In most of these case study sites, the program directors monitored progress through support provider contacts. In at least one site, support providers completed a written report each month, logging the types and length of interactions with their beginning teachers as well as noting the progress of each new teacher through the CFASST events. In all of the sites, program directors used the series of ongoing professional development meetings or trainings as a forum for monitoring progress. These meetings also allowed program directors to hear from support providers about how they and their beginning teachers were interpreting and using CFASST processes and materials. These monitoring structures allowed program directors repeated opportunities to stress the importance of particular aspects of CFASST.

Developing feedback systems to improve implementation. Beyond meetings, program directors developed additional feedback systems. It was not uncommon for program directors to ask support providers to write about ideas raised in a particular meeting or how CFASST was working in general. More often support providers and beginning teachers were asked to give oral feedback about the program. Program directors oftentimes altered upcoming professional development opportunities to address issues, concerns and questions that had been voiced.

> You also need to be flexible and committed to using evaluation data to improve the program. Just because you have all the elements in place doesn't mean that it's going to work best in your context. (Program Director, District 2, 4/00)

> We listen and we show them, over and over again, where we've modified what we've done based on their input....We tell them right up front. 'Sometimes you give us input that doesn't work because it might work for you, as an individual, but it doesn't work for the group. It doesn't mean we didn't hear it but it means that we've looked at it carefully and--at least at this point in time --we can't see a way to implement it. It may have an influence on another decision that we make.'...They have a real impact on how the consortium unfolds itself, and that it's kind of a living entity that changes and constantly looks for ways to deliver services in a way that makes good sense to the clients. (Program Director, Consortium 2, 4/00)

Taken together, program administration, participant selection and matching, provision of professional development, and ongoing monitoring and assessment comprised the overarching structural elements that directors used to implement CFASST. While these helped assure that implementation unfolded in a well-organized, timely, and coherent manner, and were therefore necessary in creating conditions for beginning teacher reflection to occur, they were not sufficient to assure that beginning teachers experienced reflection that contributed to their development in meaningful ways. The actual benefit of reflection depended on the perspectives of participants and other stakeholders, the ways in which they understood and viewed CFASST.

Perspectives That Support Reflection

Program directors understood the necessity of establishing operating structures and procedures for CFASST implementation, and they referred to an array of perspectives that enhanced or detracted from implementation: school and district professional culture; support providers' understanding of the program and their role; the extent to which the "theory of action" implicit in CFASST was aligned with the mental models of individuals and groups; ways in which

CFASST was seen as integral or peripheral to new teacher development; and other similar factors related to beliefs, values, and priorities (Lee and Storms, 2001). Both within the groups of participants who were directly involved in implementation (primarily beginning teachers and support providers) and within the environments surrounding BTSA/CFASST implementation (e.g., school sites, districts, consortia), the ways in which the program unfolded was shaped by individual and collective perspectives, values, and meanings. It was the perspectives and interpretations associated with CFASST that mediated the experiences of the beginning teachers.

CFASST implementation illustrated the pivotal role of shared meaning in shaping the conditions for teacher reflection. Questions of meaning encompassed two overlapping areas: ways in which participating individuals and groups understood and regarded CFASST, including its purpose, structure, focus, activities, principles, and organizing concepts; and, the ways in which individuals' and groups' understanding of CFASST intersected with a larger set of beliefs, values, and priorities about teaching, teacher induction, and teacher development in their settings.

Participants' Understandings of CFASST

As described earlier, the design of CFASST is organized around inquiry processes that support reflective process (Figure 1). These include the use of an inquiry strategy guided by a support provider whose principle role involves asking reflective questions; the incorporation of a recursive cycle of plan-teach-reflect-apply; and the use of a set of professional standards accompanied by descriptions of practice, as tools for formative assessment.

As program directors and participants described their experiences in implementing CFASST, they illustrated the ways in which individuals' perceptions and interpretations of CFASST and its essential elements played out. Questions and issues that arose for participants often produced alternative views and led to choices that enhanced or diminished beginning teachers' reflective practice.

Views of CFASST activities and forms. A common factor that emerged for both support providers and beginning teachers was the tension between viewing CFASST as a process of inquiry and reflection versus regarding it as a paper-driven set of activities to be completed for their

own sake. The packaging of CFASST into a set of discrete activities, each with its own set of directions and forms, organized into folders in a tote box, was interpreted by some participants to mean that filling in all the spaces on all of the pieces of paper was the essential activity. A common criticism of CFASST was the amount of paperwork. Some support providers and beginning teachers sometimes saw the inquiry activities and reflective questions associated with them as "repetitive." While some programs characterized CFASST as a reflective process with the events intended to help beginning teachers think about their practice, others placed greater emphasis on completing the forms.

Issues of flexibility. For many participants, their understanding of CFASST was linked to their ideas about what was "allowable" or "appropriate" in terms of flexibility (e.g., modification, adjustment, pacing) in using CFASST. In some instances, participants believed that the structured CFASST process had to be followed with total fidelity for beginning teachers to benefit. For example, some support providers might interrupt a "natural" flow of reflective dialogue to turn their attention to completing the forms. In other instances, participants were excessively "loose" with respect to their modifications. This tended to occur in cases in which the beginning teacher was struggling or feeling overwhelmed. In some of these instances, the support provider would suspend the CFASST process to provide more directive support.

Program directors were aware of these issues. They wanted participants to regard CFASST as a flexible process. At the same time, they felt responsible for matters of accountability and for maximizing opportunities for beginning teachers to benefit from CFASST experiences, which necessarily required attending to the structure of the process.

> One of my concerns in terms of CFASST is that the support provider understand that it isn't just a paper driven process; that there's flexibility in the process; and that the intent is to provide the scaffolding for a conversation between the support provider and the beginning teacher that helps them focus on teaching and learning. (Program Director, Consortium 1, 3/00)

> The other thing that I've been clear with the support providers in this project is, this is not a one-size-fits-all. It isn't we will do event one in September. We will do event two in October, and so on. It is a guide. If you feel that you need to stop and revisit an activity, or you need to drop a lifesaver right now, because this person is drowning, and CFASST isn't going to meet their needs right not, then you need to do that. (Program Director, Consortium 1, 2/00)

Support Providers' Perspectives

Despite having, for the most part, volunteered or applied to serve in the role, support providers differed in their views of CFASST, particularly as it intersected with their ideas about the kinds of support that beginning teachers need. Because the work between support providers and beginning teachers was the primary means through which beginning teachers were able to engage in reflection, the perspectives of support providers were fundamental to the program goals.

Support providers' views of CFASST's legitimacy. Support providers came to CFASST with a set of views about teacher induction, formative assessment and teaching itself that were based on prior experience. These views influenced how they regarded CFASST and the extent to which they considered it to be a legitimate process and set of activities for beginning teachers. In addition to their CFASST role, many support providers were also district mentors who were providing other assistance to teachers not involved in BTSA. For some support providers these varying demands were difficult to address with equal attention and to regard as equally valuable, especially the newest and most complex role, that of CFASST support provider. When this occurred, support providers sometimes faltered in their commitment to CFASST as a useful induction strategy.

> The success of CFASST has a lot to do with the quality of the support providers, the ability of the support provider to implement the program, to understand and conceptualize, to really buy into it themselves, to have a positive attitude about the program from the very beginning. (Program Director, Consortium 1, 6/00)

This issue was less prevalent in programs that had a large pool of qualified experienced teachers from which to recruit and select support providers.

> Some support providers have a deep understanding [of CFASST]. Others, it's just a sequential process they go through to get it done. . . We really need experienced practitioners here. We need people who really understand this process. (Program Director, Consortium 1, 3/00)

Support providers' understanding of their role. Just as they varied with respect to their ideas about CFASST's legitimacy, support providers also varied with respect to how they understood the support provider's role. Some support providers believed that they could best support their new teachers by providing them with sample lesson plans and assisting them with more prescriptive suggestions than by engaging in inquiry and reflection.

Since the support provider was the vehicle for "delivering" CFASST, the support provider's understanding of his or her role was essential to the success of CFASST, including how beginning teachers came to view and understand this induction program. If support providers understood and valued reflection, then that was what they emphasized in their interactions. If, however, support providers believed that their role was one of more general support, then reflecting on practice might not take precedence. In many cases, program directors worked to help support providers understand a new type of role, one that they probably had not yet experienced themselves as a teacher.

> I think the thing they [support providers] grapple with the most is the difference between a technical assistance kind of model and a support model. There continues to be a tendency to tell beginning teachers what to do. I see that more as technical assistance. It's the kind of model that we would use with somebody who was struggling, who's in jeopardy of losing their job, for example…versus the support assistance model which is reflective in nature. So I think we continue to try to provide them opportunities to learn more about how to be a reflective practitioner to enhance their own learning as an educator, but also to enhance their role as a support provider. …CFASST seems to be about working with the person and

> helping – not giving advice – but skillfully leading the beginning teacher to look at her own practice and ask the right questions to sort of find the answers. (Program Director, District 2, 4/00)

Both support providers and program directors found that comparing the different types of mentoring stances helped them better understand what CFASST was asking support providers to do.

> When I had a mentor, we did social things together. My mentor would send me a card and remember my birthday and you talked but it was at a much more superficial level. Now we really discuss lessons and we discuss curriculum and discuss what we think we could do to make it better. So nobody's afraid to even talk about the real essence of teaching. (Support provider, District 1, 5/00)

Beginning Teachers' Understandings of the Profession

For many beginning teachers, CFASST processes introduced them to entirely new concepts of teaching, the teacher's role, and professionalism. For example, many beginning teachers commented that CFASST's emphasis on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (1997) helped them achieve a new level of understanding about their responsibilities to their students. Their ideas about accountability along with using various forms of data to assess their own effectiveness deepened as they progressed through the sequence of CFASST events. Similarly, beginning teachers' ideas about professional interactions, collaboration, and learning with their colleagues were challenged and extended by their CFASST work.

> We're creating a generation of teachers who accept responsibility for their role in what the students accomplish. (Program Director, District 1, 2/00)

> He [a beginning teacher] said, 'I know math…I can do math. What I don't know how to do is to teach math. That is what BTSA gives me.' …he's right. We come in with a lot of content knowledge but how to show that content knowledge and to make it meaningful to students is a whole different skill. (Program Director, District 4, 2/00)

> I don't think I could have done the reflections, had I not been doing this...There's no way I could have been able to step back and think, because you're right in the middle of it. (Beginning Teacher, District 1, 5/00)

Relationships: Support for Reflection in Beginning Teachers

While the individual perceptions of support providers and beginning teachers were important to their participation in CFASST, the power of the process was located within the working relationship between the two. Participants characterized this relationship in many different ways. Some support providers saw themselves as advocates or as a source for positive reinforcement. Others understood the relationship to be one that was intended to help the beginning teacher think about his or her practice.

> ...for new teachers, it's nice for them to have an advocate. Too often...the new teacher gets stuck with the ickiest (sic) assignments that there are. They have the least amount of training and they get the worst assignments. They're the ones that are floating from room to room with their belongings in a shopping cart....of course I'll do whatever because you're a first year teacher and you're afraid to say no. So with my first year teachers, I practiced saying no with them and I've met with both of their administrators and said they're doing this program [CFASST]. It's the most valuable professional growth that there is. I really want you to look at lessening their load. (Support Provider, Consortium 2, 2/00)

> I think too that one thing that really helped me was that my support provider, she would never give it to me, like the information. She would make me think. And sometimes I'd just get so frustrated, 'Just tell me. I don't want to think anymore. Just tell me what to do!' But I think it's a learning process and it's the journey to get where you want to go. And it's through that process that you're going to arrive. (Beginning Teacher, Consortium 2, 5/00)

For beginning teachers whose CFASST experiences focused on reflection, CFASST provided powerful tools for improving their practice.

The beauty of the BTSA program is that no one is judging you. When they see you teach that is the heart and soul of the thing. When you sit down and say, ' These are the goals I want for this lesson and this is what I want to achieve and this is my plan.' Then she [support provider] watches and we sit down and say, 'Okay, this is what happened, now why did the results…miss the goal?' As I understand it, our goal is, when the BTSA program is over, to be able to do this ourselves without having to rely on that outside eye… (Beginning Teacher, District 4, 3/00)

It [CFASST] has taught me to be self correcting. Again, it's reflecting, reflection. You think about your lesson. Did it get through? Did you meet the standards? Are the kids getting the standards? … You never get to it, but when you have the majority of the class who don't get it, you're thinking about what else can I do? I'm going to go back. Let me try it again whether or not my support provider is there to watch…whether or not the principal is coming in. (Beginning Teacher 2, Consortium 2, 5/00)

It [CFASST] definitely makes me think about why I believe I'm leaning towards this or that. It gives me a chance to pat myself on the back if I think I'm doing okay and to also challenge myself to try harder in certain area that I'm weak in. (Beginning Teacher, District 3, 3/00)

I think they'll [beginning teachers who have used CFASST] be much more experienced than their peers who didn't complete the program. I know my second-year teacher has grown. I'm just amazed at the growth that he has made in this year, and I've had other mentees that have not been a part of BTSA and they're still struggling with the same issues this year that they were last year….My second-year teacher has just taken off and is blossoming, and is so willing to try new things and reflect and think about his own

practice. He not only reflects about it, but then he takes that information and he uses it on the next cycle. I see him doing that. (Support Provider, Consortium 2, 2/00)

Understanding CFASST Within the Larger Context

Meaning-making about CFASST occurred not only for participants, but also within the larger district and consortia contexts that housed related sets of values, ideas, and beliefs about teaching, teacher induction, and teacher development. The "fit" between CFASST and the larger context manifested itself in many ways, and the ways in which the program and the larger context mediated meaning was, for the most part, a two-way street. Contexts shaped BTSA/CFASST, and BTSA/CFASST shaped contexts. How this played out was the result of an array of factors related to organizational structure and culture. In general, however, beginning teachers were supported in their reflective practice to the extent that their CFASST programs were connected to site priorities and values. Program participants had an easier time attending to their CFASST work when they knew that others who influenced their professional lives (such as site and district administrators) considered this effort worthwhile and central. Three themes in the data captured the ways in which CFASST intersected with the larger environment.

Situation of BTSA/CFASST within the site infrastructure. The importance of BTSA/CFASST and its integration within the larger system were related to where it was situated within the site. Developing legitimacy for CFASST often meant building a close working relationship with the personnel/human relations department that recruited and hired new teachers. Such a close working relationship helped ensure that eligible beginning teachers were identified as early as possible and that appropriate criteria were applied to the selection of support providers. In one case, the BTSA program was situated in the professional development office of the district, helping to ensure that BTSA was seen as just an initial step in continuing efforts to support teachers and help them grow. In another district, BTSA was located in the curriculum department because it was seen as a way to improve instruction. The location of the program, both physically and with respect to reporting relationships and functional activities, influenced opportunities for coordination and collaboration across teacher recruitment, development, and retention efforts.

Similarly, the role and status of the program director was a factor that shaped perceptions. Some program directors were experienced, well respected professional developers and administrators with prior links to, and relationships with, district leaders. Other directors were teachers on special assignments, who stepped out of their classrooms for a period of time to direct the program, but who did not have formal status among district leaders and who may not have been as strongly networked as their administrator counterparts. Decisions about situating the program and assigning a person to direct it created not only substantive opportunities for coordination, but also symbolic messages about the fit between CFASST and other efforts.

The role of district and site leaders. District and school administrators played an important role in shaping the place of CFASST within the larger site or district context. To the extent that these leaders were knowledgeable about CFASST and supportive of its intent, they signaled its value to others. At individual sites, for example, principals could treat CFASST as the top priority for new teachers – or as simply one of many things that are happening for teachers.

> I think part of the problem is that brand new teachers at the school sites are many times asked to do the same – if not more – than tenured teachers that are there. They're asked to do extra, above and beyond if they show a certain expertise in an area. 'Oh, can you take this on? Can you do that?' I think there needs to be more sensitivity from administrators that when you have a brand new teacher, that you are more sensitive to that and you don't load them down –anything more than the normal course of things you do in your job. (Beginning Teacher, District 4, 2/00)

> Our superintendent has said, 'This program is law. It will be first priority.' That makes a big difference . . . [Administrators] realized that if we don't make it first and you've got over 50% of your staff who are turning over on a regular basis, that they're going to continue to face the same problems over and over and over again. We're not going to have any success retaining teachers. That's what this is all about. (Program Director, Consortium 1, 2/00)

Program administrators realized that often it was the school site administrator who influenced how CFASST would play out for participants. If the administrator encouraged beginning teachers and support providers to participate, then fuller involvement was more likely. However, if site administrators assigned beginning teachers additional activities or did not make (or protect) time for support providers and beginning teachers to meet, CFASST became a burden where often the attention of beginning teachers shifting to completing the events versus reflecting on their practice. To combat this program directors made it priority to communicate with site administrators.

> And so I kind of act like a broker between the support provider and the site administrator so that the support provider can continue doing his or her work. And the site administrator knows that there are certain things that are happening. I think that's essential. . . I think there needs to be, the site administrators need to know that this relationship, that BTSA and CFASST is happening at their site so that they can support it in any way that is unique to their particular site. That doesn't happen or it does happen depending on the site administrator. (Program Director, District 1, 4/00)

Links between CFASST and the larger picture of professional learning and development. In all instances, CFASST activities alone did not comprise the entire set of staff development opportunities for beginning teachers. Most beginning teachers were also required to participate in other activities typically related to district curriculum priorities and/or to expectations around classroom management. Depending on how easily these additional professional development activities could be conceptually integrated with CFASST, beginning teachers saw them either as helpful or as competing for their attention. In some programs, the CFASST process was regarded as one piece of a "web" of induction and growth experiences for teachers. In other instances, CFASST was regarded more as an "add-on" piece.

> The reason why I think I'm going to be able to carry it off [implementing CFASST Year 2 the next year] is because my director – and probably the people above her – see the

> connection between what BTSA does and what it can do to support aligning curriculum and standards and that type of thing. . . What I want to do is to use them [curriculum specialists] in the CFASST year 2 program...the district has these people in place and I think it's a good opportunity for the teacher induction program to latch onto another area of strength, which is our curriculum specialists and who happen to all be former mentors too. So they already see the relationship between taking what we do in BTSA year 1 and really making it more powerful by connecting it to content. (Program Director, District 1, 2/00)

In many cases, program directors and support providers themselves saw CFASST as professional development not only for beginning teachers, but also for veteran teachers.

> One thing our site mentors [support providers] continually comment on is that they are not sure who benefits more, the [beginning] teachers or themselves. They are constantly saying 'I reevaluate how I teach now. I'm looking at the reasons I do things in the classroom.' My support providers are always saying, 'Yes, we are there to help them (beginning teachers) but boy has this changed our teaching. It has taken us back to a new level of looking at our practice and what we are doing in the classroom with kids.' So that excites me. It is not just for beginning teachers but the veterans are benefiting as well. (Program Director, District 4, 2/00)

> As I reinforce the standards with my beginning teacher, I'm also reinforcing them in my own classroom and in my own curriculum, as well. I might see some holes as I'm going through the rubric with my beginning teacher. I'm going, 'Where am I on that rubric? Let's see...am I here? Or, am I really here? Could I improve here?' I think I've improved because of that. (Support Provider, District 2, 2/00)

Conclusions and Significance

This examination of CFASST implementation in six sites illustrated the essential but insufficient role design structures contribute to program implementation. Having the "pieces" in place was a necessary condition for implementation but not sufficient to achieve the desired

accomplishment of reflective practice on the part of beginning teachers. Equally important to the structures was the web of understanding, interpretation, and meaning that surrounded the participants in the larger context. The participants themselves both shaped and were shaped by the interpretive perspectives that encompassed their work.

Key to the success of CFASST, including its centrality and importance within districts and school sites, was the work of the program director. The ways in which program directors administered CFASST, structured CFASST experiences and monitored the progress of participants helped determine the ways in which CFASST was regarded. As important was the program directors' communication with CFASST participants and with stakeholders in the surrounding context, whereby they provided opportunities for individuals and groups to understand CFASST's intentions, strategies and processes and to shape implementation. These efforts also helped ensure that CFASST was viewed as complementary to, rather than separate from or supplanting, other site priorities.

Program directors who realized that BTSA/CFASST represented a new way of thinking about teacher induction and teacher professionalism paid attention to the perceptions of participants and others about CFASST. In their communication within CFASST (e.g., with support providers and beginning teachers) as well as outside CFASST (e.g., with district and site leaders), they attempted to combat older notions of how to help new teachers enter the profession. Program directors saw the shift in thinking as a significant one and understood that such shifts were difficult to make.

> This is new. This is a paradigm shift in how we look at our profession and if they [support providers] don't have the solid buy in and they're not completely supporting this piece, then the beginning teachers are not going to receive it in its richest and purest form. So that's just all part of this change process and getting the experienced teachers to see, this is how we look at our profession now. It's getting them to think that they have to do this (reflect on their practice), too. ...let's look at what you're doing, think about what you're

doing and your kids and see what we can do.' It's a different way of thinking. (Program Director, District 2, 6/00)

It [CFASST] provides the curriculum, the structure for our support providers to work with beginning teachers. It keeps them out of the band-aid, fix today's tragedy cycle. (Program Director, District 3, 5/00)

Program directors' knew that the ways in which participants conceived of their roles, and the degree to which site and district administrators regarded CFASST would determine whether and how well CFASST, and its priority for reflective practice, became institutionalized in their program. The most effective implementation occurred in programs where the program director actively worked to develop a shared understanding of the purpose of CFASST.

However, while effective structures and a culture supportive of reflection were necessary, they were not sufficient for ensuring that new teachers would come to understand and use reflection to improve their practice. Ultimately, it was the perceptions of the participants that determined whether the program goals were met. In particular, it mattered how support providers came to understand and act out their role and the degree to which they valued reflective practice. Those support provider perceptions strongly influenced how beginning teachers viewed and used reflection (Wing and Jinks, 2001).

Most importantly, the opportunities for beginning teachers to develop their reflective practice were tied to their experiences with the particular support providers with whom they had been matched. It was the quality of the support providers' understandings of the CFASST purpose and facility with the CFASST support provider role, as well as the relationship between the support provider and the beginning teacher, that were cited repeatedly as the keys to program success. From a design perspective, this suggests the importance of focusing on the selection criteria necessary to identify strong support providers, the training of those support providers to ensure they understand the purpose and processes of the support provider role in CFASST, and the attention to how support providers and beginning teachers are matched.

While BTSA/CFASST is a statewide program, this study has illustrated the truism that all implementation is local. Moreover, the data underscore the ways in which the meanings that are attributed to the program shape the experiences of participants. Thus, program implementation necessarily involves attending to structures, procedures, policies, and practices that support the design and intent of the program; it also requires attending to the ways in which individuals and groups understand, value, and interpret the effort. By attending to both of these aspects, program directors increased their opportunities to fully implement and create sustained support for the program.

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